



FRANKLIN COUNTY MUNICIPAL COURT
375 South High St.
Columbus, Ohio 43215-4520
(614) 645-8214
Employment Opportunity

JOB TITLE:	Small Claims Division and Dispute Resolution Department Manager
DEPARTMENT:	Small Claims Division and Dispute Resolution Department
REPORT TO:	Court Administrator
PAY GRADE:	14
STARTING SALARY:	\$33.50 /hour (\$69,680/year)
HOURS/DAYS:	Full-time 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or as assigned with occasional evening hours required
FLSA:	Exempt
POSTED:	Nov. 15, 2021
DEADLINE:	Dec. 1, 2021

JOB PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

The Franklin County Municipal Court is one of the largest and busiest municipal courts in Ohio. The Court has 14 judges in its general division and one judge in its environmental division. Judges are elected countywide for six-year terms and preside over civil, criminal and traffic cases, and conduct both jury and non-jury trials. The Court's jurisdiction includes cases involving traffic offenses, criminal misdemeanors and civil actions where the amount at issue is \$15,000 or less.

The environmental division has exclusive jurisdiction to enforce local codes and regulations affecting real property such as fire and building codes. The Court has six magistrates who preside in traffic arraignments, eviction cases and small-claims cases; one magistrate who presides in the environmental division under the supervision of the environmental judge; more than 250 employees; and an annual operating budget of \$20 million. All of the Court's employees are unclassified, at-will and serve at the pleasure of the Court.

The geographic jurisdiction of the Court is all of Franklin County and those portions of the city of Columbus that extend beyond the boundaries of Franklin County. The Franklin County Municipal Court is the judicial branch of the city of Columbus government from which it receives the majority of its funding despite its jurisdiction and name.

The small claims division was created to enable individuals, companies and other entities to pursue claims for money in amounts up to \$6,000 in a more informal and expeditious forum than the Court's general division civil docket and without the need to use an attorney. Small-claims courts are governed by Ohio Revised Code Chapter 1925. The dispute resolution department was established and expanded within the small claims division to provide mediation and facilitation services for the Court. Many disputes that come to the dispute resolution department are mediated prior to the filing of formal legal action. The division manager, who is part of the Court's senior-management team, plans, directs and supervises the operations of the small claims division and the dispute resolution department.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following duties are typical for this position, but they are not to be construed as exclusive or all-inclusive. Other duties may be required or assigned.

- Plan, direct and supervise the operations of the small claims division and dispute resolution department
- Plan, direct and evaluate all operations of the division to ensure compliance with applicable laws, rules and Court policies
- Continually analyze and evaluate the division structure, workflow, policies and procedures, and develop revisions as needed
- Establish goals and priorities for the division
- Develop, implement, manage and evaluate systems, programs and procedures to achieve goals
- Provide advice and counsel to judges and magistrates on small claims and mediation-related matters
- Develop and maintain community support and collaboration of community partners through a variety of community activities and networks
- Serve as a representative of the division and the Court to government entities and community agencies
- Attend meetings of department managers and update the court administrator, other managers, judges and magistrates on small claims and mediation-related issues
- Lead or participate in the recruitment, screening, interviewing, hiring, training and disciplining of employees
- Recruit and train mediators
- Conduct mediation sessions
- Expand and improve the operations of both the small claims and dispute resolution components of the division
- Assist in the preparation and monitoring of the division's annual budget
- Meet regularly with the Court's administrative magistrate and magistrates to improve communication and operational efficiency
- Increase the visibility and enhance the image of the division
- Become a significant presence in the Central Ohio dispute-resolution community
- Write stories and articles for the local media, give speeches and perform other activities publicizing the services offered by the division including speaking to civic, charitable, professional, academic and news organizations
- Participate in committees and organizations pertinent to the work of the division
- Participate in the ongoing review, evaluation and revision of employee policies and procedures in all departments of the Court as a senior manager
- Perform other duties and assist the court administrator with tasks and projects as assigned
- May be assigned to other duties in other departments of the Court if needed

Small Claims Division

Specific duties relative to the small claims division include the following.

- Supervise staff employees; assign work schedules and daily tasks; and hire, train, counsel, motivate and discipline employees
- Develop and monitor small claims case processing components that include but are not limited to the following.

1. Initiating small-claims cases
2. Preparing service of summons by certified and ordinary mail
3. Scanning and docketing documents such as complaints, appearance of counsel and waivers of service
4. Randomly assigning new cases to the magistrates who preside over small-claims proceedings
5. Ensuring that proceedings are scheduled at times designated by the magistrates
6. Ensuring that notices of continuances are timely issued to all interested parties or their attorneys

Dispute Resolution Department

Specific duties relative to this department include the following.

- Recruit and train volunteer, and contract mediators
- Supervise mediation supervisor, administrative assistant and mediators
- Supervise law-student interns and externs
- Work closely with instructors and academic professionals that use various mediation programs as clinical experiences for students and also provide law-student mediators for the program
- Supervise evening mediation sessions where necessary
- Mediate disputes referred to the programs by the judges and magistrates of the Court
- Supervise the Check and Account Resolution Service
- Supervise the Court's online dispute resolution service
- Supervise continuing education and mentoring for mediators

QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

- A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university
- Three years of experience in an administrative, leadership or supervisory position
- Knowledge of legal terminology and trial court operations and procedures
- Knowledge of case-management operations and processes; budget management; strategic planning; and the Ohio Revised Code as it pertains to court services and operations
- Knowledge of basic management principles, practices and procedures
- Completion of a minimum of 40 hours of mediation training or comparable college or law-school course work
- Experience mediating disputes and complaints
- Strong analytical and organizational skills and the ability to function at a high level within a large, complex organization
- Ability to organize and lead meetings of employees, judges, and others, and to make oral presentations before elected and appointed officials, public and private groups, Court employees and others
- Creativity and ability to conceive and implement innovative approaches to solve problems and meet objectives
- Ability to recognize the need for change, respond with flexibility to changing program demands, propose solutions, and ensure that solutions are implemented
- Knowledge of common office practices, procedures and equipment
- Proficiency in operating a personal computer and using, or being able to learn, Microsoft Office products including Word, Outlook, and Excel and other software programs

- Good time-management skills; highly organized and detail-oriented
- Ability to prioritize work, work independently without daily supervision, perform a variety of duties, and manage a variety of projects simultaneously in a high pressure atmosphere under sometimes severe time constraints
- Ability to effectively and professionally communicate verbally and in writing in English to diverse audiences
- Pleasant personality; ability to interact and maintain effective working relationships with judges, magistrates, other elected officials, employees, law enforcement officers, lawyers and other conducting business with the Court
- Conscious of and sensitive to the diversity within the Court's jurisdiction and ability to interact professionally with this diverse population of people from many different geographic, socioeconomic, religious, racial and ethnic backgrounds on a regular basis
- Professional appearance and demeanor appropriate for the position and expected of a representative of elected officials
- Demonstrated dependability, reliability and excellent attendance record
- Patience, objectivity, maturity, effectiveness under stress, initiative, adaptability, leadership and sound judgment

Preferred qualifications include a law degree and a license to practice law, or a master's degree in a relevant field; experience in the practice of civil law; significant experience mediating a large number of disputes and complaints, including cases more complex than a typical small-claims case; and experience working in a court or legal environment.

Additional consideration will be given to individuals who have any of the following qualifications: experience working or practicing in a multi-judge court system, especially a multi-judge trial court; work experience in a midsize to large court that had a diverse bench and staff and that served a diverse population, or meaningful experience in another work environment that brought the individual into frequent contact with a diverse population; supervisory experience; participation in a professional organization related to mediation or dispute resolution; the ability to speak and write Spanish or a language commonly used by people of Somalia for whom English is a second language; or proficiency in American Sign Language; and mediation/conflict resolution training.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The following application materials should be submitted via e-mail to CourtHR@fcmcclerk.com by the posted application deadline.

- Resume and cover letter describing with some specificity how the applicant's qualifications match those required for the position
- Completed Franklin County Municipal Court Judges' application:
<https://municipalcourt.franklincountyohio.gov/About/Employment/Employment-Opportunities>

Receipt of application materials via e-mail will be acknowledged. Applicants invited for interviews will be contacted directly by the court's human resources assistant. Candidate may be required as a part of the selection process to perform skills tests that could include exercises to test their writing ability, understanding of court systems, knowledge of legal terminology and procedures, and knowledge of Franklin County Municipal Court. The successful applicant will be required to undergo a criminal-record check.

BENEFITS

The Franklin County Municipal Court offers an excellent benefits package that includes: health, prescription, vision, dental, and life insurance; short-term disability; generous vacation, sick and personal leave; 11 paid holidays; longevity service payments; sick-leave reciprocity; an Employee Assistance Program; a deferred-compensation program; tuition reimbursement; credit-union membership; and direct deposit of net pay.

Court employees are members of the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System, which provides retirement, disability and survivor benefits for public employees. All full-time employees contribute to OPERS by paying the required employee share, which is 10 percent of their salary. The Court pays the required employer's share of 14 percent of an employee's salary. Since Court employees are members of OPERS, they also do not have any Social Security taxes withheld from their paychecks.

COURT EXPECTATIONS OF EMPLOYEE

The Court expects the employee will in completing the duties and responsibilities of the position adhere to all court policies, guidelines, practices and procedures; act as a role model both inside and outside the Court; perform duties as workload necessitates in a timely, accurate and thorough manner and be conscientious about meeting department productivity standards; and communicate regularly with supervisor about department issues.

AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT AND EQUAL-OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Employees of the Court are at-will employees and serve at the pleasure of the Court; they are not in the classified civil-service system and are not members of bargaining units. The Court is an equal-opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, religion, race, color, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, disability, military status or genetic information.